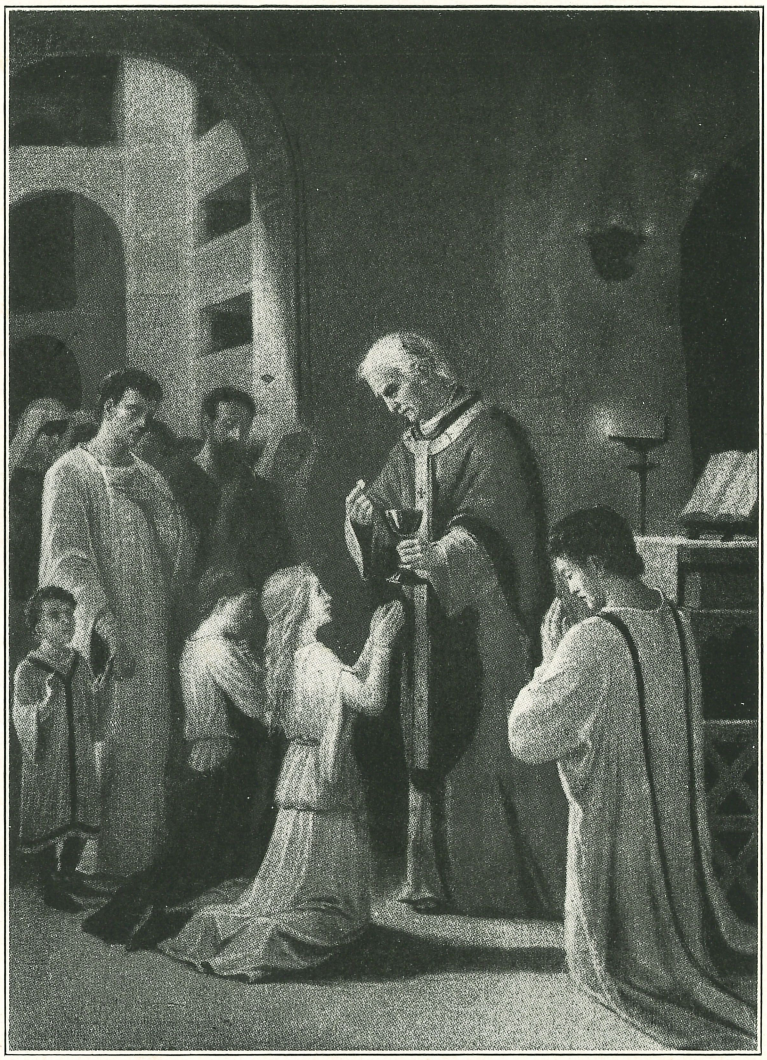
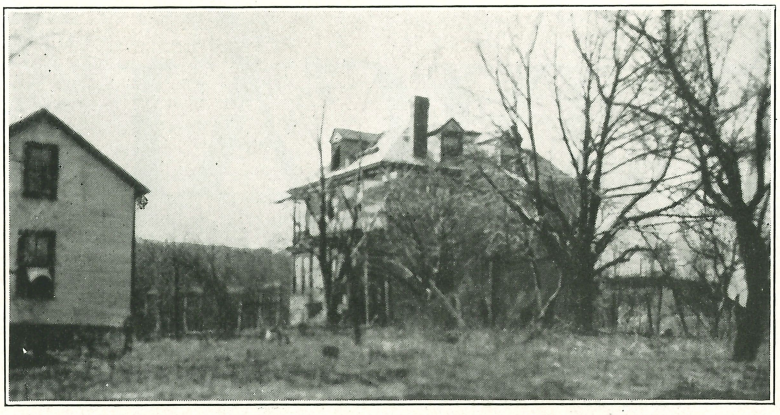
The MEDICAL MISSIONARY



Holy Communion in the Catacombs.

Vol. II APRIL, 1929 No. 7

THE MEDICAL MISSION HOUSE A REALITY



The property purchased consists of six and a quarter acres of land, one large house and three small bungalows, sufficient to accommodate the members of the Society for a few years. There is a splendid building site for the future. The grounds are surrounded by land belonging to the Sisters' College in close proximity of the Catholic University of America, Brookland, Washington, D. C.

EVER since last autumn when we were definitely told that the house we occupied since 1926 would be required by the owners at Easter, we were puzzled what to do. To move into a rented house again, we dreaded, on account of the constant expense and realizing that it would only be a temporary measure, and buying a property seemed out of the question for financial reasons. However, never venture never win has been one of our mottoes from the beginning. We are very glad that we did venture to make our problem known to our friends. They nobly and generously came to our help and made it possible for us to purchase the property we had in view. On March 12th the final settlement was made.

It consists of six and a quarter acres of land, part of which is a lovely hill and part a field. One eight-room house and three small bungalows will have to house the Medical Mission family. When they outgrow it, there is plenty of space to build. It is really with a view to the future that we invested in several acres of land.

The property overlooks the Sisters' College and is also surrounded by its grounds on three sides. Being wedged in in this peculiar fashion, it makes it specially valuable for a religious community. One of the great advantages is that only fifteen minutes walk through beautiful woodlands brings us to the Holy Cross Foreign Mission Seminary, where our candidates attend classes with the Holy Cross Sisters.

Just now, with the trees still bare, there is a beautiful view of the Holy Cross Foreign Mission Seminary, the Marist and Capuchin Colleges, the Catholic University, the Franciscan Monastery, and the Benedictine Foundation. The glories of spring will probably hide them from our eyes, to make us concentrate more on the beauty close at hand. Whilst it is pleasant, however, to think of the buds and blossoms to come, the concert of birds and the soft spring air, many prosaic things have to be considered, for this nice piece of land which we are very glad to possess, not only has none of the so-called modern improvements, but has been sadly neglected into the bargain. The grounds might be a happy hunting ground for a junk man, and the houses do not only require quantities of water and soap, but also paint, roofs, plumbing fixtures, water, electricity, a telephone, window panes and very many miscellaneous repairs. No doubt the property would have been sold long ago, but for these facts, which kept it for pioneers like us. Many would be frightened by the work required to make it habitable, but we say to ourselves that similar or worse conditions await us anyhow in the Missions, and, therefore, the only thing is to tackle them courageously one by one, as our means permit.

We attribute it to St. Joseph, under whose patronage we placed the project, that we are able to move into a property of our own, where we can gradually arrange things in a way which will be most conducive to the best possible preparation of our candidates for their missionary life. We thank all our benefactors heartily, but we will never be able to thank them sufficiently. However, it is a little consolation for us to remind them that they and we are in partnership, so to say, to build up an organization in the Church to help the sick and suffering of many nations and creeds in Mission countries, so that the charity of the Divine Physician may extend to their bodies and also open their hearts by the key of love.

WHAT ADDS TO OUR JOY—

WE cannot help but rejoice at the fact of being able to move into a house of our own—but what considerably adds to our joy is the spirit of cheerfulness and confidence of our friends who made it possible for us.

A priest writes: "I could not resist your touching appeal . . . May God bless the Medical Missionaries."

A Reverend Mother says: "Our inability to give as our heart would prompt would make us hesitate to send you so insignificant an amount as the enclosed, but the words of the little item appearing in THE MEDICAL MISSIONARY, 'But I Can Do Something,' etc., gives us courage, for we do not wish to be left out of that foundation. May God prosper it!"

From another Sister we received the following lines: "Though as poor as the proverbial church mice ourselves, I could not resist sending you a mite. Small as it is, it goes in honor of St. Joseph, rather selfishly, I fear, as we want to build a badly needed extension to our Convent, and not having a penny to start with, we have placed our needs in his hands, and, therefore, hope to win him over by helping others who are doing such a grand work of God."

A glimpse into the beautiful garden of the Franciscan Monastery, our next door neighbor for the last two and a half years.

One of our oldest friends from Harrisburg rejoices with us: "Poor St. Joseph, I was blaming him for being slow in answering our petitions and he brought about marvelous results, far beyond my most sanguine expectations. I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw in the magazine that you already had $17,000 for the Medical Mission House. God be praised! How I wish I could pay off the balance, though, I feel through small contributions the debt will soon be a thing of the past. Something to talk about the wonderful Providence of God in His work for souls, your work is twofold. Do not worry Dr. Dengel, let your necessities be known and our Heavenly Father will send helpers."

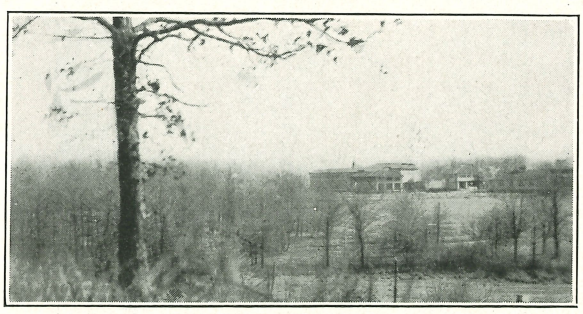
One letter written in *green* ink reads: "I received your appeal and I wish that I could send you ten times as much. I send this $20 in honor of St. Patrick, and I hope that you will get the same from all his sons and daughters in this land."

A young man's words: "I sincerely regret that I am not able to afford more than the amount enclosed. As I am still a college student working my way through, I am unable to donate more to a cause which will, no doubt, receive the blessings of God.

"May the Lord continue to shower His blessings upon you and instil in your heart and those of your companions, a fervid enthusiasm and the courage to keep plugging until the dream you have dreamed often has been realized.

Another good friend writes: "Enclosed you will find names of my acquaintances whom I think might be interested in your mission. They are all good Catholics and always ready to help any good cause. I am sure they couldn't find a more worthy one than the Medical Missions. It has interested me from the moment I read of it in the *Bengalese* and more and more as I read your magazine each month. I am hoping I may be able to help you in the Fall."

These are just extracts of a few of the many letters we received, full of encouragement and assurance of cooperation and help. We have every reason to face the future with determination and confidence.



The Sisters' College—our future neighbor—as seen from our new hill top.

THE SOCIETY AT HOME AND ABROAD

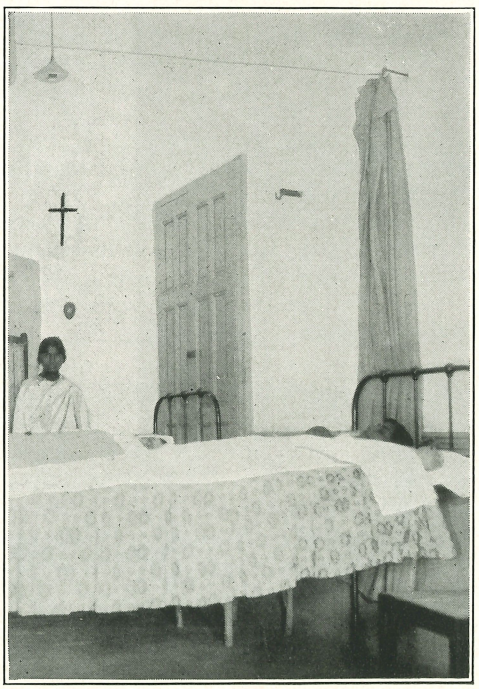
SINCE March 12th, when the purchase of the Medical Mission House was finally settled, our Sisters have been busy packing and preparing the Medical Mission House to be. The building is only about 30 years old, but having been neglected, it requires a great deal of work to make it habitable. It offers first class practice for pioneering!

Although we chose the site more with a view to the future, we had to look for one which had several buildings on it which would accommodate us for a number of years. We were fortunate to have found what we wanted. At present the quiet hill behind the Sisters' College is teeming with life; roofers, tinners, electricians, carpenters, painters and plumbers are all hard at work. At times such as these one cannot help but envy the men who shine when it comes to work of this kind. We have to look on patiently and content ourselves with "interior decorating" and be resigned to pay the bills.

We do not want to move into our house without saying a special and public word of thanks to those generous Benefactors who have tided us over the difficult question of paying rent month after month. V. Rev. Father Paul, of the Friars of the Atonement of Graymoor, knowing pioneer problems himself, from the very first spontaneously offered to help us and has done so regularly every month since the beginning of our Society three and a half years ago.

Our other Benefactors are a generous and apostolically spirited group of ladies under the leadership of Miss Katherine Hemler: the Little Flower Medical Mission Circle of Harrisburg, Pa. Their regular monthly check together with that of V. Rev. Father Paul lately supplemented by V. Rev. Msgr. James Horsburgh, Director of the Propagation of the Faith of Chicago, made it possible for us to be considered very prompt rent payers.

We shall always gratefully remember their special help in our humble beginnings.



TWO-ROOM WARD IN THE HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL, INDIA

V. Rev. Michael Mathis, C.S.C., our ecclesiastical superior who recently visited our Missionaries in India.

Our missionaries in India have been looking forward for months to the long promised visit from V. Rev. Father Mathis, C. S. C., who left the Holy Cross Foreign Mission Seminary in Brookland, D. C., in October, 1928, to visit the Holy Cross Mission in Bengal, India. Shortly before leaving India, he made a three-day trip to the far north to see our missionaries, during which various problems were discussed and interesting sights seen.

Sister Mary Laetitia writes from the Holy Family Hospital, Punjab, India: "How pleased we all were to see Father Mathis! He came armed with a movie camera and what appeared to be a large tin of coffee, but upon investigation proved to be miles of film for the famous camera. Everyone was much amused, including ourselves, at suddenly becoming movie stars. Father O'Donahue was in on the first one and re-christened himself 'Douglas Fairbanks' and gave us all new names. We had a very hilarious time, first rehearsing our walking in and out and then when we were 100 percent perfect (?), Father Mathis filmed the 'set.'

"More pictures were taken at the famous Khyber pass—at the entrance of Afganistan and also in Murree, a great summer resort 7,000 feet high, which is only two hours ride from here. The snow there in front of the houses was higher than ourselves. The snowfall has been exceptionally heavy this year. For the first time in 30 years, snow fell even in Rawalpindi for a few minutes."

We are very glad indeed that Reverend Father Mathis visited our missionaries in India and we await with eagerness the news he shall bring back with him of the Holy Family Hospital in Rawalpindi.

The MEDICAL MISSIONARY

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EDITORIALS

A Joyous and Happy Easter to all our readers!

THE MEDICAL MISSION HOUSE FUND

The Medical Mission House fund, although not complete yet, was sufficient even before Easter to make it possible for us to buy the property we had in view in time to save us the expense and inconvenience of moving temporarily into another rented house. That after all was the main thing we aimed at and even if we have to contract a small debt we can console ourselves by saying that we are not the only ones. Next month, when all the *Easter Eggs* are in, we will give a full report of the fund. In the meantime, we again thank all our Benefactors and ask our Lord to give them many Easter joys in return for their generosity to us.

OUR NEIGHBORS—OLD AND NEW

WHILST the house on Bunker Hill Road, where we lived for two and a half years, was so isolated that somebody said that "we were surrounded by nobody," and although the Franciscan Monastery, our nearest neighbor, was hidden from us the greater part of the year by a thick screen of trees, we knew that we had very good neighbors in the Franciscan Fathers, because one of them came every day, rain, hail or snow, at 6 a. m. to say Mass for us in our little chapel. We shall always gratefully remember this, as well as the many other kindnesses of the Franciscan Fathers which made our stay very happy. As the Fathers took turns to say Mass in our house, we can not thank them individually, but do so collectively and assure them of our great appreciation and desire to prove our gratitude.

The property we purchased is bordered on three sides by the grounds of the Sisters' College, so our new neighbors will be the Sisters from many different parts of the United States. This was one of the attractions of the place, there being no doubt that it will be most congenial and suitable.

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad train puffs past a few hundred feet from our grounds and as there is a crossing not very far away—it takes an extra loud breath just as it passes by. This is one of the drawbacks, but one can rarely combine only the advantages in this world!

OUR FRONT COVER

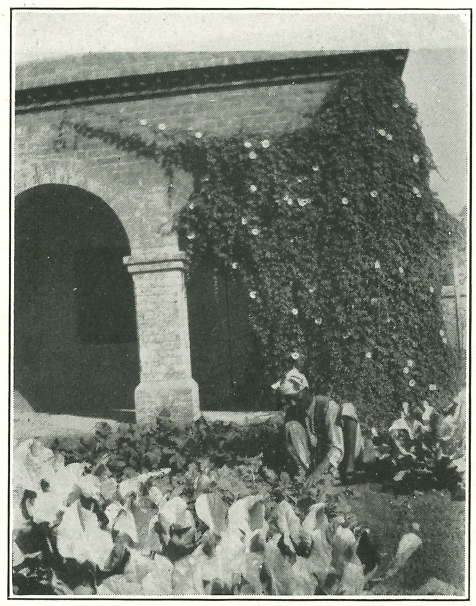
The Good Old Times—covers many *times* and one does not know exactly which specific period is meant by it. It is also very relative—as different things appeal to different people. One hundred years ago, for instance, somebody looking at a picture such as is shown on the front cover of our magazine, might have said with a deep sigh of envy: "The good old times when the first Christians were allowed to go to Holy Communion every day." Although it was at the risk of their lives, and entailed many hardships and inconveniences, they were allowed to nourish their souls frequently with the Body and Blood of Christ—the greatest possible good on earth. What did all else matter? They were fortified and inflamed with a love stronger than death. If people a hundred years ago in the stress and strain of life—could yearn in vain after the Bread of Angels to sustain them in their daily struggle—what can those of our generation say, who are invited to come to the Heavenly Banquet every morning, to commune with their God, all powerful, all merciful, all loving. What really should all else matter? There can be only one great desire left, that of eternal communion in Heaven.

Whilst most Catholics have the opportunity of frequent and many of daily Holy Communion, one can not help but think of those millions sadly ignorant of Our Lord's Testament of Love, given at the Last Supper—on that first memorable Holy Thursday. Who can fully appreciate the effects of frequent or daily Holy Communion, introduced so recently by His Holiness, Pope Pius X? In the cloister or in the world, all who will, may come daily to partake of "The Living Bread come down from heaven"—a good reason to make one thankful to belong to the household of the Faith and to live in our day.

A PUNJAB GARDEN

By Dr. Joanna Lyons

WHEN one first gets acquainted with Indian gardens, at least as exemplified in this city, one's previous notions are rather disappointed. In the first place, there seems to be no proper grass here—the baking sun and the dry earth see to that. For the greater part of the year the gardens are stretches of brown earth, set here and there with beautiful trees, a few shrubs and some varieties of flowers in beds. In the spring, for a brief season, roses



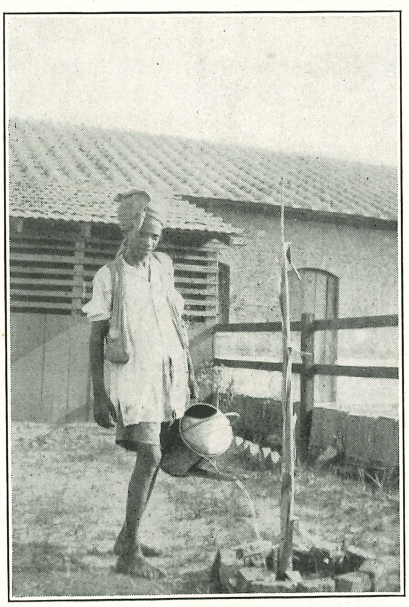
abound and flowering creepers fill the air with fragrance. At the beginning of the rainy season —which is about the middle of July—the farmers are busy putting in wheat and maize and other grains. No doubt, when the rains are well along there will be more greenness and more flowers.

Ah, but you should see the flowerpots! Millions of flowerpots and very little in them. The gardeners here seem to have one ambition in life and that is to see how many hundreds of pots they can get into the compound (yard). The fact that these pots are inhabited by scraggly geraniums with never a bloom, discouraged begonias, lanky and anaemic lilies which never come to anything, and other things of the sort, doesn't bother them in the least. Their chief occupation is to roam about with cans of water for these sickly stepchildren of Nature. On either side of our front steps here, there used to be a procession of flowerpots filled with thick clumps of what looked exactly like the wild onions we used to pull up and devour when we were children. Whatever the plants were, they remained in the same state for months and though neither useful nor beautiful, they were watered religiously.

Our Mali—he may have a name, but he is never called anything else, which signifies his occupation—is a very useful chap. By day he works about the garden, scratching a bit here and there, carrying innumerable cans of water to the aforesaid pots and running errands. He may not sweep up the garden walks, because of his caste. A very handsome sweeper woman and her two young daughters do this. One day he was much upset because he was asked to fetch some baby chickens from a neighboring compound; to have done so would have been a serious caste offense, although he can bring vegetables and such things from the bazaar.

At night he is our chaukedar. If you want to know what that is, it is a man who goes about at night and says "khabardar!" (beware). In other words, a night watchman. At home we think of a night watchman silently making his rounds and surprising evil-doers, if he can. But the Indian variety is more humane. He goes banging along with a big stick and cries out "khabardar!" as a notice to all thieves and invaders to clear out or hide. In the interest of truth I must confess that our Mali, though he is our chaukedar, does not make rounds nor call out, but sleeps quietly in his bed in front of the house and in the morning puts his bed on his head and walks off to his quarters.

Sometimes one looks at the brown dry garden and the scraggly plants and the Malis at work, and the thought comes that it is not a bad picture of our job in this bit of the vineyard. It is to go about in a dry and brown garden, stirring the ground about unhopeful plants, and keeping them alive with inadequate supplies of water from the sprinkling can, until the day when the rains come and the earth drinks its fill; when all the drooping plants lift their heads and the seeds that have been quiet so many months in the dry ground, stir and grow and come to light. If we all pray, the rain will come sooner!



THE MALI AT HIS FAVORITE JOB

THE HARMFUL EFFECT OF THE PURDAH SYSTEM

IN her recently published book, "The Purdah System and Its Effect on Motherhood," Dr. Kathleen Vaughan* brings forward valuable evidence of its harmful effect on the women of Kashmir. "The Purdah system condemns young girls to a hideous life of confinement. Separated from all contact with sunlight and open air, and ill-fed, they waste away in mind and body." She gives an account of the terrible disease, osteomalacia, which is extremely prevalent among them. This disease is characterized by softening of the bones, due to removal of calcium salts. The softened bones bend under the weight of the body resulting in great deformities which become permanent.

It is the girls of the high-class families of Kashmir who are confined to the house at eight or nine years of age, married at ten or eleven (marriage takes place very young because the younger the bride the less are the fees to the priests), and are afterwards kept in Purdah in their husband's house, and who rarely, if ever, go out. Sometimes they are shut up in rooms where they can not even look out or have glass windows fixed in the wall so that they cannot be opened. Dr. Vaughan observes that it is mainly the wives of priests, shopkeepers and officials who suffer from osteomalacia, and these women are much smaller than their men-folk. They not only suffer bodily but their minds also show the effects of this close confinement. A life in which the outside world is cut off, tends to narrowness of ideas and prevents the natural intelligence from developing. Very noticeable also is their want of energy and lack of interest in anything. In short, they are very much behind the men in intelligence.

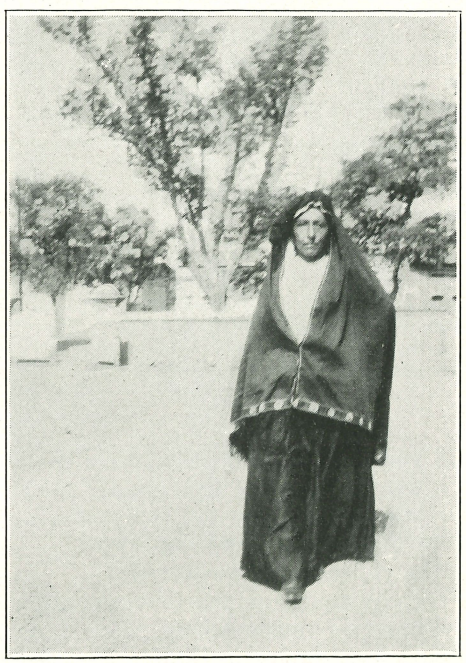
Softening of the bones is unknown among men and boys, and the boatwomen class who live in the open air are absolutely free from it. These women live on the large boats used for carrying rice, wood, etc., on the great Kashmir highway, the Jhelum River. They work hard and eat with the men and are very healthy and strong.

An interesting contrast is found in Bombay among the Parsee women who are not found to suffer from it. They have great freedom and often do not marry until 20 or 22 years of age. The women of the weaver class, on the other hand, living in the same town, are frequently affected, and were they not constantly replaced by women from the country villages around Bombay, they would die out in a generation. These poor women live in buildings which are eight stories high. The looms are in the rooms facing the street, because all available light is needed for the work, and the women live in dark rooms behind that. The mortality rate of the children of these women is said to be 678 per 1,000.

Deprivation of sunlight seems to be a main contributing factor in the production of osteomalacia and the suffering of thousands of mothers, and this in a country where sunshine abounds.

* Dr. Kathleen Vaughan practised medicine for many years among the women of India. She was for several years in charge of the State Hospital for women and children in Srinagar, Kashmir, where osteomalacia is more common than in any other part of India.

PATHAN PURDAH LADY COMES TO THE DISPENSARY



THE SAME UNVEILED

SUCCESS AT WHAT PRICE?

AS UGANDA may be a future field of labor of the Society, the Editor was particularly interested to receive a short time ago, a copy of the Pastoral letter which Rt. Rev. Henry Streicher, Vicar Apostolic of Uganda, Africa, addressed to the neophytes of his Vicariate on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Mission. (1879-1929.)

The Rt. Rev. Bishop mentions briefly how the first White Fathers penetrated a hostile African territory assigned to them by the Holy Father and how the pioneers almost perished in the last stage of their journey crossing the Victoria Nyanza Lake in a worm eaten boat leaking on all sides—the hardships being aggravated by hunger and fever and mutiny among the disheartened crew. After three years of hard labor the king, although kind to the Fathers for a time, was so influenced by the calumnies of the Mohammedan courtiers, that he made it so unbearable for them, they deemed it best to leave temporarily. After three years they found it possible to return and to their joy they found that the 30 Christians whom they had left behind had in their absence baptized 1,777 on their deathbed and that the number of catechumens had risen from 280 to 900.

Very soon, however, fresh difficulties arose. A new king, who proved a relentless enemy of the Christians was set over the people. By this event, God singled out Uganda from among other African countries by bestowing upon it the glory of martyrdom. With admiration, it was learned in Europe, that negro youths, brought up at court, and christened but yesterday had the courage to endure cruel sufferings and to lay down their lives for Christ. In all about 80 died for their faith. After three years of this reign of terror, the cruel king was dethroned, but under his Mohammedan successor, the mission fared still worse. The priests were fettered, thrown into prison and the mission pillaged. "Let us kill them," cried some—others said, "let us send them back to Europe after having pierced their eyes." Finally, the Moslems were satisfied sending them home saying: "We allow you to leave—but never dare to return." Then followed a war with efforts to reinstate the old king. The missionaries did their best to bring it about, but at this time, says the Bishop, our poverty reached extremes, yea almost the destitution of Jesus on the Cross. Catholics also were in grave plight, fleeing from the enemy, scores of refugees falling by the wayside and being devoured by wild beasts, others dying of hunger; bubonic plague set in and mowed down more victims than famine and smallpox. "This, however, turned out a blessing in our favor," says the Bishop, "for thousands and thousands came to us from all sides to learn how to pray. We were eight priests in Uganda then. Days were too short to cope with the work of the ministry, we often had to sacrifice sleep. At the very dawn churches were overcrowded with the faithful longing for the Sacraments, and sheds were crammed with catechumens. In one mission alone 1,800 catechumens followed the catechetical instruction in preparation for baptism and every three months 400 were baptized. The missionaries were amazed and wondered whence came all these crowds."

Now, at the time of the Golden Jubilee, there are 304,636 Catholics in Uganda, which is partly under the jurisdiction of the White Fathers and partly under that of the Mill Hill Fathers.

In the territory of the White Fathers there are at present 126 priests of whom 36 are natives. There are 33 White Sisters and 19 Religious Marie Reparatrice and a number of Brothers from Canada.

At the close of the Pastoral letter the Bishop dwells on what he calls: a crown with three gems; the native priests, sisters and brothers. In 1893 a seminary for native priests was founded. Twenty years elapsed before out of 400 students, two were deemed worthy of the priesthood. Now the Native clergy counts 36 priests who are zealous, prudent, indefatigable and very apt to direct souls. At present seven parishes are in their entire charge. A second seminary was founded five years ago.

In 1900 the first native congregation of Sisters: "The Daughters of Mary" was founded. After a probation of eight years, the first postulants were allowed to begin their regular novitiate. In the first band there were 8—now they number 183. Even the Religious of Marie Reparatrice have some native auxiliaries. Recently, a native Brotherhood, to provide teachers for the Vernacular Schools and Coadjutors to the Native Fathers also came into being.

The Venerable Bishop, after enumerating the sorrows and joys, concludes his Pastoral by exhorting his flock to great gratitude for all the signal favors bestowed on the mission and wishes them to celebrate the Golden Jubilee on January 20 with great fervor and joy.

What Catholic would not rejoice with the Bishop and his flock over the wonderful success, which won for Uganda the name: "The Pearl of the Missions." At what price, however, was it obtained? From the Pastoral we can only gather that the sacrifices made and sufferings endured by the missionaries are beyond imagination and description.

Our Society was hardly a few months old when a letter arrived from the late Rt. Rev. Bishop Forbes, then coadjutor Bishop to Bishop Streicher, asking us to undertake a hospital in the Capital of Uganda; and last August Bishop Streicher himself wrote: "One gem in the Mission is still lacking—that of Medical efficiency and I beseech you to come and make the setting." As much as we would like to go at once—we realize that before we will be privileged to work in this fruitful portion of the vineyard of the Lord we will have a hard and stoney road to travel.

It is against prudence to scatter missionaries and to start missions without a solid foundation at home. Being convinced of this and anxious to answer as soon as possible the call of the missionaries from different parts of the Orient for Medical Missionaries, we will make every effort in our power to solidify the Society at home. One great step towards it, is the establishment of a permanent Medical Mission House. Realizing this, we are very happy to state that thanks to our benefactors we have been able to acquire a piece of property for this purpose.

A SPRING POEM

"Are you lonely?" said the rosebush
To the violet at its feet,
"For you can not see the sunbeams,
Nor my buds surpassing sweet."
But the violet gently answered
From its couch of pearl-strewn sod:
"My heart is never lonely,
For I live alone for God."

—R. J. DOWLING, S.J.

ADDRESS OF THE SOCIETY AT HOME
CATHOLIC MEDICAL MISSION HOUSE,
BROOKLAND, WASHINGTON, D. C.

ADDRESS OF OUR MISSIONARIES IN INDIA
HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL
MURREE ROAD, RAWALPINDI CITY, PUNJAB, INDIA

SUBSCRIPTION TO "THE MEDICAL MISSIONARY"—
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